

# **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

## **JUDICIAL COUNCIL COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE (CASA) GRANT PROGRAM**

RFP CFCC-08-30-02  
JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA  
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS  
CENTER FOR FAMILIES, CHILDREN & THE COURTS

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	
<b>General Information</b>	<b>4</b>
Background	4
Grant Program Objectives	5
Program Funding	6
Grant Eligibility	7
<b>Application Instructions for Existing CASA Programs</b>	<b>8</b>
Proposal Content Requirements	8
Areas of Concentration	9
Proposal Abstract	9
Proposal Narrative	9
Submission of Proposal	15
Evaluation and Selection Process	16
<b>Application Instructions for New CASA Programs</b>	<b>17</b>
Proposal Content Requirements	17
Proposal Abstract	17
Proposal Narrative	17
Submission of Proposal	22
Evaluation and Selection Process	22
<b>Requirements for Grantees</b>	<b>24</b>
General	24
Standard Agreement	24
Monitoring and Reporting	24
Accounting Systems and Financial Records	25
Project-Related Income	26
Matching Requirements and Definition of Matching Funds	26
<b>Application Instructions for Development Grants</b>	<b>28</b>
Proposal Content Requirements	28
Proposal Abstract	30
Proposal Narrative	30
Submission of Proposal	33
Evaluation and Selection Process	34
<b>Requirements of Grantees</b>	<b>35</b>
General	35
Standard Agreement	35
Monitoring and Reporting	35
Accounting Systems and Financial Records	35
Matching Requirements and Definition of Matching Funds	37

Attachments	
Sample Submittal Letter	Attachment I
List of Possible Outcome Measures	Attachment II
Abstract	Attachment II
Project Budget Form	Attachment II
Grant Project Activity Plan Form	Attachment II
California Rules of Court, rule 1424	Attachment III
Welfare and Institutions Code, sections 100 – 109	Attachment IV

**Request for Proposals (RFP)**  
**Judicial Council Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Grant Program**

**RFP No. CFCC-08-30-2002**

**General Information**

The Judicial Council of California offers grants to establish and maintain Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) programs that serve abused and neglected children who are the subject of judicial proceedings. In November 2002 the Judicial Council will award a total of \$1,775,000 to new and existing CASA programs in California and \$50,000 to counties interested in beginning the process of developing a CASA program. The funding period for the 2002–2003 grants is December 1, 2002, to November 30, 2003.

**Background**

Legislation enacted by Statutes of 1988, chapter 723, added section 100 of the Welfare and Institutions Code to require the Judicial Council to adopt program guidelines for local Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) programs to assist abused and neglected children who are the subject of judicial proceedings. The legislation also called for the establishment of a grant proposal program to be administered by the Judicial Council. The legislation required that any county wishing to receive funding under the grant program must adopt the council guidelines and incorporate them into local rules of court. Owing to the success of the grant program, legislation was enacted (Stats. 1993, ch. 16) to repeal section 110 (the sunset clause) of the Welfare and Institutions Code, thus making the program a permanent part of the council's administrative duties.

In enacting the legislation, the Legislature found:

The intelligent and careful use of volunteer energies is a great untapped resource. Research shows that the use of volunteers to provide support to high risk families is more effective than the treatment of professionals alone. The key to solving our immense social problems is the establishment of an effective working partnership between the courts, public agencies, private foundations and agencies, and volunteers . . . the use of public-private partnership and volunteerism has proven to be a cost-effective and sound problem-solving tool.

In accordance with the legislation, an advisory committee consisting of appropriate program and professional specialists recommended program guidelines that were approved by the Judicial Council effective January 1, 1990. Through the budget process, funding was obtained for the establishment of a grant proposal program to be administered by the Judicial Council.

The Judicial Council, effective January 1, 1991, adopted the program guidelines for mandatory use in any superior court or county receiving funding under the grant program. Effective July 1, 1992, the council adopted the program guidelines as section 24.5 of the Standards of Judicial Administration. The council, effective July 1, 1994, made the guidelines mandatory for all California programs by adopting the guidelines as rule 1424 of the California Rules of Court.

The legislation requires the council to report to the Legislature on the implementation of the program and to include recommendations on the continued funding and expansion of the grant program. The grant program and individual projects will be monitored and evaluated by the Judicial Council's Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee and the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) through its Grant Program Manager. Findings and recommendations will be submitted to the Judicial Council on a regular basis in preparation for its reporting to the Legislature.

### **Grant Program Objectives**

The objective of the Judicial Council Court Appointed Special Advocate Grant Program is to assist, through enhancement of local CASA programs as specified in the legislation, abused and neglected children who are the subject of judicial proceedings. The grant program is intended to provide funds to encourage counties to establish or expand volunteer child advocate programs under carefully monitored guidelines. The Judicial Council will administer, oversee, and evaluate each grant recipient program.

One of the goals listed in the Judicial Council's Operational Plan is for CASA programs to serve dependent children in all 58 counties in California by the year 2003. In 2001, a new "Children Served" category was added to the RFP section for existing programs. This category and the number of points allocated to the response reflect the Judicial Council's commitment to increase the number of abused and neglected children served by CASA in California. In last year's proposal, the "Children Served" questions asked how programs planned to increase the number of children served. This year and hereafter, the questions are related to how programs accomplished an increase in the number of abused and neglected children served.

The Judicial Council is again offering development grants as a funding option in 2002–2003. Two categories of development grants are available: the Preliminary Development Grant and the Collaboration Development Grant. Applicants may apply for a development grant one time only.

### **Funding from the Probation Department and the Department of Social Services (DSS)**

In 2000, the Judicial Council amended Rule 1424 to prohibit any CASA program from operating under the auspices of a probation department or department of social services (DSS). The rule was amended because the Judicial Council determined that it would be a conflict of interest for CASA programs to operate under the auspices of a probation department or DSS. Although the provision precludes a CASA program from working under the auspices of a probation department or DSS, it did not explicitly prohibit a CASA program from receiving funding (in kind or monies) from these agencies. Funding from a probation department and DSS presents

the same conflict of interest and undermines the independence of CASA. In order for CASA volunteers to remain effective in their roles as child advocates and for CASA programs to maintain their integrity, CASA programs should not appear to be in any way beholden to a probation department or DSS. Unfortunately, receiving funding from these agencies may create the perception that the program is not independent. For this reason, the Judicial Council will be seeking rule amendments to clarify the policy that CASA programs cannot receive funding from a probation department or DSS.

Fundraising is difficult in these economic times, and it was only after much thought and discussion that it was concluded that this policy needed clarification. Because several CASA programs rely on money from these agencies for their operations and because this policy decision will place these programs in a difficult financial position, programs currently receiving DSS and probation department funding have **three years (from December 1, 2002 to November 30, 2005)** to find other sources to fill the funding gap left by this decision. In order to begin this transition, please identify (1) all in-kind and cash contributions from DSS and/or a probation department and (2) what percentage of your budget currently comes from DSS or probation funding. In the same document, please describe your plan to transition from DSS and/or probation department funding to other funding (please also see, "Application Instructions For Existing CASA Programs").

## **Program Funding**

### *Grants for New and Existing Programs*

For fiscal year 2002–2003 the total amount of grant funding is \$1,775,000 to establish, maintain, or expand funding of local CASA programs. The funds will be made available as grants to the selected CASA programs. The legislation requires local matching funds or in-kind funds equal to any proposal request. (See Welf. & Inst. Code, § 100, included as Attachment IV.) The maximum state grant per county program per year shall not exceed \$45,000 in counties in which the population is less than 700,000 and \$60,000 in counties in which the population is 700,000 or more according to the annual population report provided by the Department of Finance. As of January 1, 2002, Welfare and Institutions Code Section 100 will include the revised statutory caps for grant funding based on county population size. Programs may request the increased maximum amounts in the proposals. The actual grant amount awarded per county per year may vary based on need, responsiveness to this request for proposals, the total number of proposals submitted, and the results of the evaluation by the Selection Review Committee.

### *Development Grants*

The fiscal budget for 2002–2003 also contains \$50,000 for development funds for counties without CASA programs. The funds will be made available as grants for up to \$10,000 to five selected counties interested in beginning the work of developing a CASA program or collaborating with a neighboring CASA program to serve dependent children in the non-CASA county. The actual grant amount awarded per county may vary based on need, the responsiveness to this request for proposals, and the results of the evaluation by the Selection Review Committee.

## **Grant Eligibility**

For new and existing CASA program applicants, the Judicial Council will enter into agreements with county CASA programs only. Any other agencies desiring to participate must do so as part of the county's CASA proposal. However, proposals will be accepted from umbrella organizations establishing a CASA program as a component of the larger nonprofit organization as long as the CASA program represents the sole county CASA program.

For collaborative development grant applicants, the Judicial Council will accept *one* proposal per county. All agencies desiring to participate must do so as part of the county's one proposal. In the case of a multicounty group applying for a preliminary development grant to establish one CASA program, the Judicial Council will accept one proposal representing the multicounty group.

## Application Instructions For Existing CASA Programs

### Proposal Content Requirements

In order to be considered for a Judicial Council CASA grant, applicants must submit the following:

- A letter from the program director certifying that the information in the proposal is true and complete and that the county program is operating in compliance with rule 1424 of the California Rules of Court (sample of letter provided at Attachment I and rule 1424 provided at Attachment III);
- A proposal abstract (see Proposal Abstract section of these instructions for more detail);
- A proposal narrative, including the required attachments (see Proposal Narrative section of these instructions for more detail);
- A copy of your Peer Assessment and Compliance Review (PACR) Corrective Action Plan submitted to the Judicial Council (if a review has been completed)—**please do not send the Individual Program PACR report**;
- A copy of your most recent fiscal audit of your program performed by an independent CPA or accounting firm; <sup>1</sup>
- A copy of your initial plan to transition from DSS and/or probation department funding or in-kind support to other funding. (if you are currently receiving DSS and/or probation department funding or in-kind support, please specify the in-kind services, the total amount of contributions received and what percentage of your entire program budget this funding represents);
- A copy of your revised grievance report (see “Program Narrative, 1. ‘CASA Program Description’”);
- A letter indicating program support from (1) the presiding judge of the superior court and (2) the presiding judge of the juvenile court;
- A letter of support from the local child welfare agency or department of social services;
- At least **two** letters of support from local community organizations (bar associations, service providers, etc.); and
- Interagency letters of agreement from each participating agency (if applicable).

---

<sup>1</sup> Please note, your CASA contract with the Judicial Council may include an audit protocol for 2002-2003.



## Areas of Concentration

All programs submitting a proposal must select one of the following as an area of concentration for the Judicial Council grant year:

- Volunteer recruitment;
- Volunteer retention;
- Board development;
- Collaborative work with other programs (i.e., training);
- Shift in programmatic emphasis (i.e., infants and toddlers);
- Program expansion; or
- (other) \_\_\_\_\_

The selected area of concentration should reflect the organization's strategic plan or an objective that has been identified by the presiding judge, the board, or the staff. A firm commitment to the area of concentration must be represented in your responses to items 4 and 5 of your proposal narrative. Successful bidders will be asked to monitor development in the selected area of concentration through quarterly reports to the AOC Grant Program Manager.

## Proposal Abstract

A completed Abstract form must accompany your proposal and should be the first page of your proposal packet. This form is provided at Attachment II, or you may download the Microsoft Word version of the Abstract form at

[www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm).

## Proposal Narrative

The proposal narrative may not exceed 10 single-spaced pages, and must respond to items 1 – 8 below. Margins must be at least 1 inch and font size must be at least 12 point. (The Project Budget and Grant Project Activity Plan forms and other required attachments are not included in the 10-page limit.) Your response to each item in the Proposal Narrative section of your proposal must be identified with the same item numbers as below.

### 1. CASA Program Description (10 points)

Briefly describe your CASA program. Include a very brief account of how and when the program began (the approximate date). Describe the number, demographics (age, ethnicity, gender), and functions of existing staff and the current number of volunteers and their demographics. Describe your specific volunteer recruitment policy to increase ethnic diversity, the number of men, and volunteers able to work with dependent children with special needs. Describe the manner in which volunteers are supervised, including how court reports are reviewed and distributed. The demographic information may be submitted in a narrative or chart format. The chart should be included as an attachment and will not be counted as one of the allotted 10 pages. (2 points)

Describe the program's relationship with the court, including how many judicial officers hear dependency cases and appoint CASA volunteers. Describe the judges' involvement in the program and methods for ongoing communication with the court. Describe the judicial response to volunteer court reports and the role of the volunteers who appear in court. (If your program serves children outside the jurisdiction of the dependency court, please include comparable information for the other jurisdictions served.) Please describe the program's relationship with dependency attorneys and explain how legal representation for children in your county is affected by appointment of a CASA. (3 points)

Describe the program's relationship with the county child welfare agency. Also, please describe collaborations with other social service agencies or organizations. (If your program works with other jurisdictions, please include collaborations with relevant agencies, e.g., the probation department.) (2 points)

Rule 1424(g)(1)(G) currently requires that a CASA program have a written grievance protocol for grievances brought by the volunteer or against the volunteer by any party. AOC staff plan to seek revisions to rule 1424 to change rule 1424(g)(1)(G)'s current language to, "The plan shall include a procedure for reviewing grievances by any individual brought against the volunteer or program." Please revise your grievance procedure to meet the requirements of the new language and include a copy of the procedure with this proposal. The grievance protocol should be included as an attachment and will not be counted as one of the allotted 10 pages. (3 points)

## **2. Statement of Need (10 points)**

Describe the type of county your program serves, including the number of abused and neglected children in the *county* and their ethnicity, age, and placement statistics. Describe the population of children your *program* is currently serving, including their ethnicity, age, and placement statistics. Include the percentage of the court's dependency population that your program serves. The county and program demographic information may be submitted in a narrative or chart format. The chart should be included as an attachment and will not be counted as one of the allotted 10 pages. (5 points)

Describe how referrals are made and who makes them. Describe the procedure for the selection of cases and the appointment of CASA volunteers for children in juvenile court proceedings. Describe how many children are on your waiting list and how the waiting list is managed, including the average length of time a child is on the waiting list. (3 points)

Describe the specific needs of the dependency population in the county your program serves and special programs that your CASA program has implemented to meet those needs. (2 points)

### 3. Children Served (20 points)

Describe the outcome of your 2001–2002 Judicial Council CASA grant project. Did you accomplish the goals outlined in your 2001–2002 grant proposal? If so, briefly state how you accomplished them. If not, describe the obstacles or barriers to the project's success. Did the outcome of your project increase the number of children served by your program? If so, what was the percentage increase? (5 points)

#### **Select one of the categories below.**

##### **Single-County Program Serving a Percentage of the Dependency Population**

Please briefly describe your program plans to increase the number of children served in 2002–2003. (If you also serve children from other jurisdictions, please include them in your answer.) Your response may include several program areas. However, do not include your project area of concentration in this response. (10 points)

By what percentage do you intend to increase the number of children served this next fiscal year? Please describe how you decided on this percentage increase. (5 points)

##### **Single-County Program Serving All of the Dependency Population**

Explain how you will enhance the services your county's children are already receiving through CASA. (If you also serve children from other jurisdictions, please include them in your answer.) Your response may include several program areas. However, do not include your project area of concentration in this response. (15 points)

##### **Multicounty Programs Serving a Percentage of the Dependency Population**

Please briefly describe your program plans to increase the number of children served for each county in 2002–2003. (If you also serve children from other jurisdictions, please include them in your answer.) Your response may include several program areas. However, do not include your project area of concentration in this response. (10 points)

By what percentage do you intend to increase the number of children served in each county during the next fiscal year? Please describe how you decided on this percentage of increase. (5 points)

### 4. Project Design (15 points)

Fully describe your program's 2002–2003 area of concentration, why it was selected, and how this project will enhance the overall effectiveness of your CASA program. The area of concentration cannot be "to increase the number of children served." (See pages 4–5 for areas of concentration.) (5 points)

Explain the goals of the 2002–2003 area of concentration. (The goals should describe the outcomes expected rather than the activities to be conducted.) (5 points)

Explain how the project will be evaluated. (Examples: How will you determine effectiveness and impact? How will cost-effectiveness be determined?) (5 points)

## **5. Methodology (12 points) and Activity Plan (3 points)**

Describe the activities that are directly related to attaining the goals of your 2002–2003 area of concentration. (This should be a narrative of your attached Grant Project Activity Plan form.) (4 points)

Explain the data collection software system you have in place and the data your program collects on an ongoing basis. Describe outcome measures that you are currently tracking and evaluating. Describe **three** new outcome measures that you will start tracking in 2002–2003. (See Attachment II for a list of possible outcome measures. You may use any from this list or choose your own.) Describe anticipated obstacles, if any, to tracking these new outcome measures. (4 points)

Explain data collection that will be done specifically to monitor the 2002–2003 goals of your area of concentration. (4 points)

Complete and attach the Grant Project Activity Plan form. All proposed activities should be listed to show a logical progression toward the goal(s) of your area of concentration. (This plan should correspond to those activities described in item 5 of your narrative.) This form is provided at Attachment II, or you may download the Microsoft Word version of the Grant Project Activity Plan form at [www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm). (3 points)

## **6. Organizational Capacity (10 points)**

Explain the organizational structure of your program, including the lines of authority among the presiding judge of the juvenile court, the board of directors, and the program director. Describe how the program is administered and governed. (3 points)

What is the role of the board of directors and/or advisory board? Discuss the size and makeup of the board (including *demographics*), training provided for the board, and plans for board development. Please attach rosters of these boards. How are policies established and management decisions made? If your program operates under an umbrella organization or court, include a description of that organization, its relationship to the CASA program, and its role in management and decision making for the CASA program. (7 points)

## **7. Funding and Financial System (10 points)**

Describe the financial systems that are used to manage the program's finances. Who is responsible for monitoring project expenditures and financial reporting? (2 points)

Give an overview of the actual and anticipated funding sources and the amounts of your program's income budget (including donated goods and services) for the current fiscal year and the preceding two fiscal years. (Please be certain to state the start and end dates of your fiscal year.) (2 points)

Attach actual and anticipated income **and** expense budgets for the current fiscal year and the preceding two years. (2 points)

Describe **fundraising activities, the board's involvement**, and who is responsible for these activities. Include a description of any special fundraising events you plan to hold during this Judicial Council funding period (December 1, 2002–November 30, 2003). (4 points)

#### **8. Budget Narrative and Project Budget Form (10 points)**

If your program did not spend the total grant award from the 2000 – 2001 funding period, please explain. Do you anticipate spending the total 2001 – 2002 grant award? If not, please explain. (2 points)

Explain the proposed use of Judicial Council grant funds and matching funds. The budget narrative should provide sufficient detail to justify the total amount budgeted in each category, including the basis for computation of all costs, and should correspond directly to the expenses outlined on your budget form. Examples of eligible types of expenditures are the development and printing of training materials, the development and printing of informational brochures, salaries for staff, rental of office space, and purchase of office supplies or equipment. (8 points)

Budget categories and information needed for your budget narrative are:

**Personnel:**

Set forth the name of each person, the hourly rate, and the hours expected to be devoted to the proposed project. Explain any deviations from current compensation rates or established written organizational policies.

**Fringe Benefits:**

Provide a description of the projected actual fringe benefits to be provided to the employees who are to work on the project, not to exceed 26 percent of the base salary.

**Rent:**

Explain the basis for computation.

**Travel:**

State the purpose of the travel and include an explanation of the rate used, including the components of the per diem rate and the basis of the estimated

transportation expenses. Transportation costs and per diem rates must comply with the policies of the applicant organization. If the applicant does not have an established policy, then travel rates should be consistent with those established by the California State Board of Control.

Equipment:

Describe the equipment to be purchased or leased and explain why that equipment is essential to accomplish the grant project's goals and objectives. The narrative should clearly identify which equipment is to be leased and which is to be purchased. The method of procurement should also be described. *Note:* Grant funds may be used to purchase or lease only equipment that is essential to accomplishing the objectives of the grant project. **Written approval by the AOC Grant Program Manager is required when lease or purchase of equipment exceeds \$500.**

Supplies:

Provide a general description of the supplies necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives of the grant project. In addition, provide the details supporting the total requested for this expenditure category.

Telephone:

Provide anticipated telephone charges and the basis used in developing the long – distance estimates.

Postage:

Provide anticipated postage costs. The basis for postage estimates should be included.

Printing/Photocopying:

Provide anticipated costs for printing or photocopying. The basis for printing and photocopying estimates should be included.

Contractual:

Describe the type of service to be provided by any contracted consultants. The basis for compensation rates and the method for selection should also be included. *Note:* Written approval of the AOC Grant Program Manager is required when the rate of compensation to be paid a consultant exceeds \$300 a day.

Peer Review Fee (Mandatory):

Five percent of the requested Judicial Council grant must be allocated to this section of the budget. These funds will be transmitted directly to the Peer Review Project.

Other:

Please explain what the expense is and provide a basis for computation.

The Judicial Council CASA Grant Program “require[s] local matching funds or in-kind funds equal to the proposal request.” (Welf. & Inst. Code, § 100.) If you are using a cash match, the funds must be from a source within your program’s county. You may also use an in-kind match such as volunteer hours. Your budget narrative should explain the source of your match and, if you are using a cash match, how this will be used. If you are using volunteer hours as an in-kind match, you must also include the hourly rate to be used and the basis for calculation of this rate. Your matching funds do *not* need to correspond by line item to the line item funds requested from the Judicial Council. Matching share must be budgeted with the same detail as out-of-pocket expenses and must follow the same guidelines as described above for the budget categories.

Complete and attach the Project Budget form. This form is provided at Attachment II or you may download the Microsoft Word version of the Project Budget form at [www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm).

**Note:** Costs for developing proposals are entirely the responsibility of the potential grantee and are not chargeable to the Judicial Council or the State of California and are not reimbursable under any resulting grant.

### **Submission of Proposal**

Pages must be consecutively numbered, including attachments. Proposals may not be printed in color and may not be spiral- or tape-bound (proposals may be stapled). The narrative section of your proposal may not exceed 10 pages, margins must be at least 1 inch, and the font size must be at least 12 point.

**All proposals must be received at the Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, October 22, 2002.** Proposals received after this time will be disqualified. In a sealed package with the title and number of the RFP plainly marked on the outside, send one proposal with an original signature and *12 complete copies* to:

Ms. Stephanie Leonard, CASA Grants Program Manager  
Judicial Council of California  
Center for Families, Children & the Courts  
455 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco, California 94102-3660

All materials submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of the Judicial Council, and any information therein may be used by the council and returned only at the option of the council. All proposals received will become part of the public record and may be made available to other CASA programs and interested parties and organizations.

## Evaluation and Selection Process

It is the intent of the Judicial Council to make awards to programs that best fulfill the intent of the legislation and demonstrate that abused and neglected children receive effective services from the program and its volunteers.

At the time of submittal, each proposal will be reviewed for the presence of the required information in conformance with the requirements of this RFP. A proposal may be rejected if it is conditional or incomplete or if it contains alterations of format or other irregularities of any kind.

All proposals meeting the requirements of this RFP will be submitted to the Judicial Council's Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee, Selection Review Subcommittee. This subcommittee will evaluate and score the proposals based on the score allocations laid out in the Proposal Narrative section of this RFP. The proposal should address every section of the RFP. An omitted response results in no score for the section omitted and no contribution to the overall score. The Selection Review Subcommittee will prepare an evaluation package containing the final rankings and award recommendations.

Evidence that indicates that the applicant, applicants' staff, or consultants have in any way attempted to influence the confidential nature of the review through contacts with Judicial Council staff or members of the Selection Review Subcommittee **will result in the automatic rejection of the proposal.**

The proposed budget may be negotiated at the option of the Judicial Council and budget line item adjustments may be requested, but the total amount in the proposal may not be increased.



## **Application Instructions for New CASA Programs**

### **Proposal Content Requirements**

In order to be considered for a Judicial Council CASA grant, applicants must submit the following:

- A letter from the program director certifying that the information in the proposal is true and complete (sample of letter provided at Attachment I; please modify as necessary);
- A proposal abstract (see Proposal Abstract section of these instructions for more detail);
- A proposal narrative, including the required attachments (see Proposal Narrative section of these instructions for more detail);
- A letter indicating program support from (1) the presiding judge of the superior court and (2) the presiding judge of the juvenile court;
- A letter of support from the local child welfare agency or department of social services;
- At least **two** letters of support from local community organizations (bar associations, service providers, etc.); and
- Interagency letters of agreement from each participating agency (if applicable).

### **Proposal Abstract**

A completed Abstract form must accompany your proposal and should be the first page of your proposal packet. This form is provided at Attachment II or you may download the Microsoft Word version of the Abstract form at

*[www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm)*

### **Proposal Narrative**

The proposal narrative may not exceed 10 single-spaced pages, and must respond to items 1 – 6 below. Margins must be at least 1 inch, and font size must be at least 12 point. (The Project Budget and Grant Project Activity Plan forms and other required attachments are not included in the 10-page limit.) Your response to each item in the Proposal Narrative section of your proposal must be identified with the same item numbers and letters as below.

**1. Statement of Need and Benefits Expected (16 points)**

- a. Describe the need in your county for a CASA program. Include a description of the current system of representing abused and neglected children. (3 points)
- b. Describe the need for Judicial Council support for the proposed program. (4 points)
- c. Describe the program objectives and the benefits expected (including cost-effectiveness). (4 points)
- d. Attach feasibility studies or needs assessments for a CASA program. (1 point)
- e. Describe the client population to be served. (2 points)
- f. Attach gender/age/racial/ethnic data on children in the dependency population. (2 points)

**2. Approach/Project Design (29 points)**

- a. Describe how the proposed program will comply with the state guidelines set forth in rule 1424 of the California Rules of Court (Attachment III). (7 points)
- b. Describe how the proposed program will fit into the administrative structure in your county (will the program be established as a private nonprofit entity, with or without a written agreement with the court; will it be established within the court, etc.). (2 points)
- c. Describe how the proposed program will coordinate with existing public and private child welfare and advocacy agencies. (4 points)
- d. Describe how the proposed program will coordinate, for training and program development, with the California CASA Association, other CASA programs in California, the juvenile court, and local bar associations. (4 points)
- e. Describe anticipated caseloads and staffing patterns. (4 points)
- f. Describe plans to meet the specific needs of the dependent children in your jurisdiction. (4 points)
- g. Attach a list of proposed members of program governing/advisory boards. (4 points)

**3. Implementation (33 points)**

- a. Describe the trainable volunteer pool in your county; state the anticipated number of volunteers to be recruited, screened, and trained during the grant year. (3 points)

- b. Describe the public relations plan for your proposed program. (2 points)
- c. Describe volunteer and staff recruitment; describe strategies you will use to attract minority participation. (5 points)
- d. Describe how volunteers will be screened and trained. (4 points)
- e. Describe how volunteers will be supervised. (3 points)
- f. Describe the mechanism by which cases will be referred to the program. (2 points)
- g. Describe any anticipated resistance to the proposed program; describe what will be done to address that resistance. (3 points)
- h. Describe the current status/stage of development of the project. (2 points)
- i. Describe any volunteer recognition efforts planned for the program. (1 point)
- j. Describe the community support for the proposed program. (2 points)
- k. Complete and attach a Grant Project Activity Plan form, highlighting primary program activities for the 2002 – 2003 grant year (for example, planning committee or board meetings; office opening; management staff hiring; volunteer recruitment and training; staff training; development of informational, training, or case referral documents, etc.). The Grant Project Activity Plan form is provided at Attachment II, or you may download the Microsoft Word version of the form at [www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm). (6 points)

**4. Organizational Capability (7 points)**

- a. Indicate who will set policy for the proposed program. (2 points)
- b. Describe strategies for program continuity. (2 points)
- c. Describe planned data collection efforts. (2 points)
- d. Indicate how liability coverage for staff and/or volunteers will be provided for. (1 point)

**5. Funding Support (11 points)**

- a. Indicate the source and amount of proposed matching funds for this grant request, including proposed in-kind matches and donated services. Attach letters of commitment specifying funding amounts from the relevant government agencies (if relying on public funds) or the relevant private foundations or agencies. (5 points)

- b. Describe the anticipated funding base for the grant year and the subsequent year. (4 points)
- c. Describe fund-development plans, including plans to build ongoing, stable financial support for the program. (2 points)

**6. Budget Narrative and Project Budget Form (4 points)**

Explain the proposed use of Judicial Council grant funds and matching funds. The budget narrative should provide sufficient detail to justify the total amount budgeted in each category, including the basis for computation of all costs, and should correspond directly to the expenses outlined on your budget form. Examples of eligible types of expenditures are the development and printing of training materials, the development and printing of informational brochures, salaries for staff, rental of office space, and purchase of office supplies or equipment.

Budget categories and information needed for your budget narrative are:

Personnel:

Set forth the name of each person, the hourly rate, and the hours expected to be devoted to the proposed project. Explain any deviations from current compensation rates or established written organizational policies (if applicable).

Fringe Benefits:

Provide a description of the projected actual fringe benefits to be provided to the employees who are to work on the project, not to exceed 26 percent of the base salary.

Rent:

Explain the basis for computation.

Travel:

State the purpose of the travel and include an explanation of the rate used, including the components of the per diem rate and the basis of the estimated transportation expenses. Transportation costs and per diem rates must comply with the policies of the applicant organization. If the applicant does not have an established policy, then travel rates should be consistent with those established by the California State Board of Control.

Equipment:

Describe the equipment to be purchased or leased and explain why that equipment is essential to accomplish the grant project's goals and objectives. The narrative should clearly identify which equipment is to be leased and which is to be purchased. The method of procurement should also be described. *Note:* Grant funds may be used to purchase or lease only equipment that is essential to

accomplishing the objectives of the grant project. **Written approval of the AOC Grant Program Manager is required when lease or purchase of equipment exceeds \$500.**

Supplies:

Provide a general description of the supplies necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives of the grant project. In addition, provide the details supporting the total requested for this expenditure category.

Telephone:

Provide anticipated telephone charges and the basis used in developing the long – distance estimates.

Postage:

Provide anticipated postage costs. The basis for postage estimates should be included.

Printing/Photocopying:

Provide anticipated costs for printing or photocopying. The basis for printing and photocopying estimates should be included.

Contractual:

Describe the type of service to be provided by any contracted consultants. The basis for compensation rates and the method for selection should also be included.

*Note:* Written approval of the AOC Grant Program Manager is required when the rate of compensation to be paid a consultant exceeds \$300 a day.

Other:

Please explain what the expense is and provide a basis for computation.

The Judicial Council CASA Grant Program “require[s] local matching funds or in-kind funds equal to the proposal request.” (Welf. & Inst. Code, § 100.) If you are using a cash match, the funds must be from a source within your program’s county. You may also use an in-kind match such as volunteer hours. Your budget narrative should explain the source of your match and, if you are using a cash match, how this will be used. If you are using volunteer hours as an in-kind match, you must also include the hourly rate to be used and the basis for calculation of this rate. Your matching funds do *not* need to correspond by line item to the line item funds requested from the Judicial Council. Matching share must be budgeted with the same detail as out-of-pocket expenses and must follow the same guidelines as described above for the budget categories.

Complete and attach the Project Budget form. This form is provided at Attachment II, or you may download the Microsoft Word version of the Project Budget form at [www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm).

**Note:** Costs for developing proposals are entirely the responsibility of the potential grantee and are not chargeable to the Judicial Council or the State of California and are not reimbursable under any resulting grant.

### **Submission of Proposal**

Pages must be consecutively numbered, including attachments. Proposals may not be printed in color and may not be spiral- or tape-bound (proposals may be stapled). The narrative section of your proposal may not exceed 10 pages, margins must be at least 1 inch, and font size must be at least 12 point.

**All proposals must be received at the Judicial Council/ Administrative Office of the Courts by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, October 22, 2002.** Proposals received after this time will be disqualified. In a sealed package with the title and number of the RFP plainly marked on the outside, send one proposal with an original signature and **12 complete copies** to:

Ms. Stephanie Leonard, CASA Grants Program Manager  
Judicial Council of California  
Center for Families, Children and the Courts  
455 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco, California 94102-3660

All materials submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of the Judicial Council, and any information therein may be utilized by the council and returned only at the option of the council. All proposals received will become part of the public record and may be made available to other CASA programs and interested parties and organizations.

### **Evaluation and Selection Process**

It is the intent of the Judicial Council to make awards to programs that best fulfill the intent of the legislation and demonstrate that abused and neglected children receive effective services from the program and its volunteers.

At the time of submittal, each proposal will be reviewed for the presence of the required information in conformance with the requirements of this RFP. A proposal may be rejected if it is conditional or incomplete or if it contains alterations of format or other irregularities of any kind.

All proposals meeting the requirements of this RFP will be submitted to the Judicial Council's Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee, Selection Review Subcommittee. This subcommittee comprises both Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee members and Center for Families, Children & the Courts (CFCC) staff. This subcommittee will evaluate and score the proposals based on the score allocations laid out in the Proposal Narrative section of this RFP. The proposal should address every section of the RFP. An omitted response results in no score for the section omitted and no contribution to the overall score. The Selection Review

Subcommittee will prepare an evaluation package containing the final rankings and award recommendations.

Evidence that indicates that the applicant, applicants' staff, or consultants have in any way attempted to influence the confidential nature of the review through contacts with Judicial Council staff or members of the Selection Review Subcommittee **will result in the automatic rejection of the proposal.**

The proposed budget may be negotiated at the option of the Judicial Council and budget line item adjustments may be requested, but the total amount in the proposal may not be increased.

## **Requirements for Existing and New Program Grantees**

### **General**

Each county CASA grantee must:

- Adhere to the program guidelines adopted by the Judicial Council under rule 1424 of the California Rules of Court (if applicable);
- Agree to work with the Judicial Council Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee and the Administrative Office of the Courts CASA Grants Program Manager in implementing any research program design developed, to ensure uniform data collection and reporting (if applicable);
- Submit to the AOC CASA Grants Program Manager quarterly written reports of activities and tasks completed under the grant;
- Cooperate in any program audit and site visits conducted by the CASA Grants Program Manager;
- Agree to cooperate in a peer review whether it occurs during the grant year (for existing programs only) or in the following years;
- Certify that the program has installed a data collection software system and that the system is operational;<sup>2</sup>
- Comply with the requirements of this RFP.

### **Standard Agreement**

No grant award is reimbursable until a State of California Standard Agreement form has been signed by the Administrative Office of the Courts and the grantee. Special terms and conditions, as appropriate, will be included in the agreement.

### **Monitoring and Reporting**

The AOC CASA Grants Program Manager will monitor the ongoing progress of the Judicial Council CASA Grant Program and the individual projects. The AOC CASA Grants Program Manager will be directly involved with the new counties in initial project implementation and ongoing data collection and reporting.

---

<sup>2</sup> Data collection software is available through the National CASA Association to its members.



CASA programs will be required to submit to the AOC CASA Grants Program Manager quarterly written reports of activities and tasks accomplished. The programs will also be required to submit all data reports as required by the AOC CASA Grants Program Manager to ensure that all data is collected in a uniform manner. The quarterly reports will also be used for the Peer Review Project.

### **Accounting Systems and Financial Records**

Grantees are required to establish and maintain accounting systems and financial records to accurately account for the funds they receive. The accounting systems and financial records must indicate total program costs, including state funds, local matching shares, and any other funding sources included in the approved project budget.

#### *Accounting System Requirements*

The grantee is responsible for establishing and maintaining an adequate system of accounting and internal controls. An acceptable and adequate accounting system is considered to be one that:

- a. Properly accounts for receipt of funds under each grant awarded and the expenditure of funds for each grant by category of expenditures (including matching funds and project income);
- b. Ensures that expended funds are applied to the appropriate budget category included within the approved grant;
- c. Presents and classifies historical costs of the grant as required for budgetary and evaluation purposes;
- d. Provides cost and property controls to ensure optimal use of grant funds;
- e. Is integrated with a system of internal controls adequate to safeguard the grant funds and assets, check the accuracy and reliability of the accounting data, promote operational efficiency, and ensure conformance with any general or special conditions of the grant;
- f. Meets the prescribed requirements for periodic financial reporting of operations;
- g. Maintains a clear audit trail; and
- h. Provides financial data for planning, control, measurement, and evaluation of direct and indirect costs.

#### *Method of Payment*

Grantees will submit a monthly Report of Expenditures and Request for Funds form to request funds in arrears to cover actual expenditures paid. Line items will be shown in accordance with the budget categories specified in this RFP. The Report of Expenditures and Request for Funds must include the following supporting documentation:

- a. Time sheets: Time sheets must indicate the actual time worked each day. They must include the original signatures of both the employee and the approver. (Copies of signatures will not be accepted.)
- b. Travel expense reports: Travel expense reports should include the original signatures of the individual and the approver. (Copies of signatures will be accepted.)
- c. Vendor invoices and/or interoffice charges of \$10 or more: All paid vendor invoices and/or interoffice charges should be marked “PAID” with the check number noted. The approved budgeted category must also be referenced on the paid vendor invoices and/or interoffice charges, (for example, “contractual services”). (Copies will be accepted.)

No reimbursement will be provided for expenses incurred prior to the effective date of the signed grant agreement or after the grant period end date.

#### *Audit Requirements*

All grantees shall be required to have an annual, fiscal audit of the entire program performed by an independent certified public accountant or accounting firm.

#### **Project-Related Income**

Project-related income includes income from all other sources, such as contributions, donations, sale of publications of the project, funds from other grant programs, registration fees etc., that affect the AOC CASA grant project. Records of the receipt and disposition of project-related income must be maintained and reported by the grantee in the same manner as required for the grant funds that gave rise to the income.

#### *Project-Related Income Usage*

Grant recipients must obtain prior approval for all project-related income. Income anticipated when the grant proposal is prepared must be budgeted to offset specific items of expenses.

#### *Reporting of Project-Related Income*

All project-related income affecting the AOC grant project, even if not anticipated when the grant proposal was prepared, must be reported on the relevant monthly Report of Expenditures and Request for Funds form.

#### **Matching Requirements and Definition of Matching Funds**

Because the grant program requires local matching funds, the grantee is obligated to designate a portion of the project budget in “matching funds” as provided in the approved budget. Within the generic class of matching funds are cash match and in-kind match.

The nature of the match (cash or in-kind) must be explained and, at the application stage, the tasks and line items for which costs will be covered wholly or in part by matching funds must be specified.

### *In-Kind Match*

In-kind match is a non – cash match that includes time (spent by employees) or services donated to the grant project. Examples include prorated costs for existing office space, indirect costs, and other goods and services. Be sure matching funds are not counted more than once; in other words, the same hour cannot be charged to more than one grant.

### *Cash Match*

Cash match is a specific sum of money set aside for the project by the grantee agency or specific grant-related expenditures committed by the grantee during the application stage of the grant for expenditures that otherwise would not have been made. Whether or not the expenditure involves “out-of-pocket” expenses is a good test for whether the matching contribution is cash or in-kind.

### *Timing/Reporting of Matching Funds*

Each Report of Expenditures and Request for Funds must contain a year-to-date total match that either meets or exceeds the year-to-date total grant expenses. In instances where a proposed match is not fully met, the state will reduce the award amount accordingly, in order to maintain the ratio originally provided for in the award agreement.

The signed documentation submitted for in-kind must state the source of the match and how it is being applied to the project budget. Time sheets submitted for volunteer hours must contain the number of hours worked and the hourly rate being used and must include original signatures of both the volunteer and the approver.

### *Record Keeping for Matched Funds*

The grantee must maintain records that clearly show the source, amount, and timing of all matching contributions. Matching shares must be accounted for with the same detail as out-of-pocket expenses.

If a project has included within its approved budget matching contributions that exceed the required matching contribution, the grantee must maintain records of those matching contributions in the same manner as it does the state funds and required matching shares.

## Application Instructions For Development Grants

The Judicial Council is offering two categories of development grants: the Preliminary Development Grant and the Collaboration Development Grant. **Applicants may apply for a development grant one time only.**

Preliminary Development Grant funds are being offered to persons interested in starting a CASA program in a county (or counties) that currently does not have one. These funds are available to assist with initial development expenses, such as those associated with conducting research, establishing a planning committee, and hiring a grant writer. **It is the intent of the development grant program that grantees submit a “New CASA Program” Judicial Council CASA Grant proposal for 2003–2004.**

Collaboration Development Grant funds are being offered to counties where low numbers of dependent children make the establishment of a CASA program unrealistic. This type of county may collaborate with a neighboring county’s CASA program to serve the dependent children in the non-CASA county.

### Proposal Content Requirements

In order to be considered for a Judicial Council CASA development grant, applicants must submit the following:

- A **single proposal** from each county:
  - For Collaboration Development Grant applicants, all interested persons and agencies (Child Protective Services, attorneys, community volunteers) desiring to participate must do so as part of the county’s one proposal; and
  - For Preliminary Development Grant applicants interested in developing a multi-county program, please submit one proposal.
- A letter from the applicant certifying that the information in the proposal is true and complete (sample of letter provided at Attachment I; please modify as necessary).
- A proposal narrative, including the required attachments (see Proposal Narrative section of these instructions for more detail).

*For Preliminary Development Grants:*

- A letter indicating support for the development of a CASA program in the applicant's county (or applicants' counties) from (1) the presiding judge of the superior court and (2) the presiding judge of the juvenile court;
- A letter of support for the development of a CASA program in the applicant's county (or applicants' counties) from the local child welfare agency or department of social services; and
- At least **two (or four if representing two counties)** letters of support for the development of a CASA program in the applicant's county (or applicants' counties) from local community organizations (bar associations, service providers, etc.).

*For Collaboration Development Grants:*

- A letter in support of the collaboration from (1) the presiding judge of the superior court from the county without a CASA program and (2) the presiding judge of the juvenile court in the county without a CASA program;
- A letter in support of the collaboration from the local child welfare agency or department of social services in the county without a CASA program;
- At least **two** letters in support of the collaboration from local community organizations (bar associations, service providers, etc.) in the county without a CASA program;
- A letter in support of the collaboration from the presiding judge of the juvenile court in the county with the CASA program;
- A letter in support of the collaboration from the CASA program's board of directors;
- A letter in support of the collaboration from the local director of the child welfare agency or department of social services in the county with the CASA program; and
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) established between the CASA program and the county without a CASA program.

## **Proposal Abstract**

A completed Abstract form must accompany your proposal and should be the first page of your proposal packet. This form is provided at Attachment II, or you may download the Microsoft Word version of the Abstract form at [www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm).

## **Proposal Narrative**

The proposal narrative may not exceed 5 single-spaced pages and must respond to items 1–3 below. Margins must be at least 1 inch; font size must be at least 12 point. (The Project Budget and Grant Project Activity Plan forms and other required attachments are not included in the 5-page limit.) Your response to each item in the Proposal Narrative section of your proposal must be identified with the item numbers below.

### **1. Statement of Need (20 points)**

Briefly describe your county, including relevant information that affects dependency issues: for example, high unemployment, high rate of teen pregnancies. (5 points)

Describe the need in your county for a CASA program **or** for CASA advocacy through collaboration with an existing CASA program. Include a description of the current system for representation of abused and neglected children. (5 points)

Describe the client population to be served in your county, including the number of abused and neglected children and their gender, ethnicity, age, and placement statistics. (If this information is not readily available in your county, contact California CASA staff for assistance.) The demographic information may be submitted in narrative or chart format. The chart should be included as an attachment and will not be included in the 5 – page limit. (5 points)

Describe your county's need for Judicial Council support to begin the development of a CASA program or of CASA advocacy through collaboration with an existing CASA program. (5 points)

### **2. Project Design and Implementation (30 points)**

**Select A or B:**

#### ***A. Preliminary Development Plan***

Does your county intend to work with a neighboring county without a CASA program to establish a multicounty CASA program? If so, please explain. If not, please explain. (5 points)

Explain the goals of your preliminary development plan for establishing a CASA program in your county (or counties). The goals should describe the outcomes expected rather than the activities to be conducted. (5 points)

Describe the activities directly related to attaining the goals of your 2002–2003 preliminary development plan. This should be a narrative of your attached Grant Project Activity Plan. Please modify as necessary (see Attachment II). (4 points)

Describe your strategy for including community members in your planning committee or core development group that will reflect the community's diverse population. (5 points)

Describe your county's (or counties') resources that will assist you in establishing a CASA program. Describe financial and other barriers to developing a CASA program. (5 points)

Complete and attach a Grant Project Activity Plan form, highlighting primary activities for the 2002–2003 grant year (for example, meeting with California CASA Association to review the developmental steps for creating a CASA program, creating a planning committee, hiring a consultant or grant writer, traveling to CASA programs). The Grant Project Activity Plan form is provided at Attachment II, or you may also download the Microsoft Word version of the form at [www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm). (6 points)

### ***B. Collaboration Development Plan***

Explain the goals of the collaboration between the neighboring CASA program and your county. The goals should describe the outcomes expected rather than the activities to be conducted. (5 points)

Describe the activities directly related to attaining the goals of your 2002–2003 collaboration plan. This should be a narrative of your attached Grant Project Activity Plan form. Please modify as necessary (see Attachment II). (4 points)

Complete and attach a Grant Project Activity Plan form, highlighting primary activities for the 2002–2003 grant year (for example, meeting with California CASA, identifying key stakeholders, developing a resource list, etc.). The Grant Project Activity Plan form is provided at Attachment II, or you may also download the Microsoft Word version of the form at [www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm). (5 points)

Is the collaborating CASA in substantial compliance with rule 1424 of the California Rules of Court? How many children does the collaborating program serve? What percentage of that county's population of dependent children is the program serving? (5 points)

Describe your county's and the CASA program's resources that will assist in establishing a collaboration to serve the dependent children in your county. Describe financial and other barriers to developing a collaboration. (5 points)

Please submit the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) established between your county and the CASA program. The MOU should include the anticipated number of children served, the objectives and the benefits expected (including cost-effectiveness), and the amount of payment for services. (*Please note: children from other CASA programs transferred to your county would not be included in this arrangement.*) (6 points)

### **3. Budget Narrative and Budget Form (10 points)**

Describe the financial systems that will be used to manage the grant funding. Who is responsible for monitoring project expenditures and financial reporting? (2 points)

Explain the proposed use of Judicial Council grant funds and matching funds. The budget narrative should provide sufficient detail to justify the total amount budgeted in each category, including the basis for computation of all costs, and should correspond directly to the expenses outlined on your budget form. Examples of eligible types of expenditures are salaries for staff, fees for consultants, travel expenses, and purchase of office supplies. (4 points)

Budget categories and information needed for your budget narrative are:

#### Personnel:

Set forth the name of each person, the hourly rate, and the hours expected to be devoted to the proposed project. Explain any deviations from current compensation rates or established written organizational policies.

#### Fringe Benefits:

Provide a description of the projected actual fringe benefits to be provided to the employees who are to work on the project, not to exceed 26 percent of the base salary.

#### Rent:

Explain the basis for computation.

#### Travel:

State the purpose of the travel and include an explanation of the rate used, including the components of the per diem rate and the basis of the estimated transportation expenses. Transportation costs and per diem rates must comply with the policies of the applicant organization. If the applicant does not have an established policy, then travel rates should be consistent with those established by the California State Board of Control.



Supplies:

Provide a general description of the supplies necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives of the grant project. In addition, provide the details supporting the total requested for this expenditure category.

Telephone:

Provide anticipated telephone charges and the basis used in developing the long – distance estimates.

Postage:

Provide anticipated postage costs. The basis for postage estimates should be included.

Printing/Photocopying:

Provide anticipated costs for printing or photocopying. The basis for printing and photocopying estimates should be included.

Contractual:

Describe the type of service to be provided by any contracted consultants. The basis for compensation rates and the method for selection should also be included. *Note:* Written approval of the AOC Grant Program Manager is required when the rate of compensation to be paid a consultant exceeds \$300 a day.

Other:

Please explain what the expense is and provide a basis for computation.

The Judicial Council CASA Grant Program “require[s] local matching funds or in-kind funds equal to the proposal request.” (Welf. & Inst. Code, § 100.) If you are using a cash match, the funds must be from a source within your program’s county. You may also use an in-kind match such as volunteer hours. Your budget narrative should explain the source of your match and, if you are using a cash match, how this will be used. If you are using volunteer hours as an in-kind match, you must also include the hourly rate to be used and the basis for calculation of this rate. Your matching funds do *not* need to correspond by line item to the line item funds requested from the Judicial Council. Matching share must be budgeted with the same detail as out-of-pocket expenses and must follow the same guidelines as described above for the budget categories.

Complete and attach the Project Budget form. This form is provided at Attachment II, or you may download the Microsoft Word version of the Project Budget form at [www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm).

## **Submission of Proposal**

Pages must be consecutively numbered, including attachments. Proposals may not be printed in color and may not be spiral- or tape-bound (proposals may be stapled). The narrative section of your proposal may not exceed 5 pages, margins must be at least 1 inch, and font size must be at least 12 point.

**All proposals must be received at the Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, October 22, 2002.** Proposals received after this time will be disqualified. In a sealed package with the title and number of the RFP plainly marked on the outside, send one proposal with an original signature and *12 complete copies* to:

Ms. Stephanie Leonard, CASA Grants Program Manager  
Judicial Council of California  
Center for Families, Children and the Courts  
455 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco, California 94102-3660

All materials submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of the Judicial Council, and any information therein may be utilized by the council and returned only at the option of the council. All proposals received will become part of the public record and may be made available to other CASA programs and interested parties and organizations.

### **Evaluation and Selection Process**

It is the intent of the Judicial Council to make awards to programs that best fulfill the intent of the legislation and demonstrate that abused and neglected children receive effective services from the program and its volunteers.

At the time of submittal, each proposal will be reviewed for the presence of the required information in conformance with the requirements of this RFP. A proposal may be rejected if it is conditional or incomplete or if it contains inaccurate information, alterations of format, or other irregularities of any kind.

All proposals meeting the requirements of this RFP will be submitted to the Judicial Council's Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee, Selection Review Subcommittee. This subcommittee is comprised of both Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee members and Center for Families, Children & the Courts staff. This subcommittee will evaluate and score the proposals based on the score allocations laid out in the Proposal Narrative section of this RFP. The proposal should address every section of the RFP. An omitted response results in no score for the section omitted and no contribution to the overall score.

## **Requirements for Development Funding Grantees**

### **General**

Each applicant must:

- Agree to work with the Judicial Council Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee and the Administrative Office of the Courts Grant Program Manager in implementing any research program design developed, to ensure uniform data collection and reporting (if applicable);
- Submit to the AOC CASA Grants Program Manager quarterly written reports of activities and tasks completed under the grant;
- Cooperate in any program audit and site visits conducted by the Grant Program Manager; and
- Comply with the requirements of this RFP.

### **Standard Agreement**

No grant award is reimbursable until a State of California Standard Agreement form has been signed by the Administrative Office of the Courts and the grantee. Special terms and conditions, as appropriate, will be included in the agreement.

### **Monitoring and Reporting**

The AOC CASA Grants Program Manager will monitor the ongoing progress of the Judicial Council CASA Grant Program and the individual projects. The AOC CASA Grants Program Manager will be directly involved with the new counties in initial project implementation and ongoing data collection and reporting.

CASA programs will be required to submit to the AOC CASA Grants Program Manager quarterly written reports of activities and tasks accomplished. The programs will also be required to submit all data reports as required by the AOC CASA Grants Program Manager to ensure that all data is collected in a uniform manner.

### **Accounting Systems and Financial Records**

Grantees are required to establish and maintain accounting systems and financial records to accurately account for the funds they receive. The accounting systems and financial records

must indicate total program costs, including state funds, local matching shares, and any other funding sources included in the approved project budget.

#### *Accounting System Requirements*

The grantee is responsible for establishing and maintaining an adequate system of accounting and internal controls. An acceptable and adequate accounting system is considered to be one that:

- a. Properly accounts for receipt of funds under each grant awarded and the expenditure of funds for each grant by category of expenditures (including matching funds and project income);
- b. Ensures that expended funds are applied to the appropriate budget category included within the approved grant;
- c. Is integrated with a system of internal controls adequate to safeguard the grant funds and assets, check the accuracy and reliability of the accounting data, promote operational efficiency, and ensure conformance with any general or special conditions of the grant;
- d. Meets the prescribed requirements for periodic financial reporting of operations;
- e. Maintains a clear audit trail; and
- f. Provides financial data for planning and control of direct and indirect costs.

#### *Method of Payment*

The Administrative Office of the Courts will issue a \$5,000 advance payment upon the contract being fully executed. Upon receipt of a fully executed copy of the development grant contract, the contractor can submit an invoice requesting the \$5,000 advance payment. The invoice form will be included with the contract documents.

Grantees will submit a monthly Report of Expenditures and Request for Funds form to request funds in arrears to cover actual expenditures paid. Line items will be shown in accordance with the budget categories specified in this RFP. The Report of Expenditures and Request for Funds must include the following supporting documentation:

- a. Time sheets: Time sheets must indicate the actual time worked each day. They must include the original signatures of both the employee and the approver. (Copies of signatures will not be accepted.)
- b. Travel expense reports: Travel expense reports must include the original signatures of the individual and the approver. (Copies of signatures will be accepted.)
- c. Vendor invoices and/or interoffice charges of \$10 or more: All paid vendor invoices and/or interoffice charges should be marked "PAID" with the check number noted. The approved

budgeted category must also be referenced on the paid vendor invoices and/or interoffice charges (for example, “contractual services”). (Copies will be accepted.)

No reimbursement will be provided for expenses incurred prior to the effective date of the signed grant agreement or after the grant period end date.

### **Matching Requirements and Definition of Matching Funds**

Because the grant program requires local matching funds, the grantee is obligated to designate a portion of the project budget in “matching funds” as provided in the approved budget. Within the generic class of matching funds are cash match and in-kind match.

The nature of the match (cash or in-kind) must be explained and, at the application stage, the tasks and line items for which costs will be covered wholly or in part by matching funds must be specified.

#### *In-Kind Match*

In-kind match is a noncash match that includes time (spent by employees) or services donated to the grant project. Examples include prorated costs for existing office space, indirect costs, and other goods and services. Be sure matching funds are not counted more than once; in other words, the same hour cannot be charged to more than one grant.

#### *Cash Match*

Cash match is a specific sum of money set aside for the project by the grantee agency or specific grant-related expenditures committed by the grantee during the application stage of the grant for expenditures that otherwise would not have been made. Whether or not the expenditure involves “out-of-pocket” expenses is a good test for whether the matching contribution is cash or in – kind.

#### *Timing/Reporting of Matching Funds*

Each Report of Expenditures and Request for Funds must contain a year-to-date total match that either meets or exceeds the year-to-date total grant expenses. In instances where a proposed match is not fully met, the state will reduce the award amount accordingly, in order to maintain the ratio originally provided for in the award agreement.

The signed documentation submitted for in-kind or cash match must state the source of the match and how it is being applied to the project budget. Time sheets submitted for volunteer hours must contain the number of hours worked and the hourly rate being used and must include original signatures of both the volunteer and the approver.

#### *Record Keeping for Matched Funds*

The grantee must maintain records that clearly show the source, amount, and timing of all matching contributions. Matching shares must be accounted for with the same detail as out-of-pocket expenses.

If a project has included within its approved budget matching contributions that exceed the required matching contribution, the grantee must maintain records of those matching contributions in the same manner as it does the state funds and required matching shares.

**[ATTACHMENT I]**

**[SAMPLE — USE YOUR ORGANIZATION’S LETTERHEAD]**

[Date]

Ms. Stephanie Leonard, CASA Grants Program Manager  
Judicial Council of California  
Administrative Office of the Courts  
455 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco, California 94102

Dear Ms. Leonard:

Pursuant to the provisions of the Request for Proposals dated August 30, 2002, and known as Judicial Council Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Grant Program (RFP CFCC-08-30-2002), our proposal is attached. This proposal includes:

1. A letter indicating program support from (1) the presiding judge of the superior court and (2) the presiding judge of the juvenile court;
2. A letter of support from the local child welfare agency or department of social services;
3. At least **two** other letters of support from local community organizations (bar associations, service providers, etc.);
4. Interagency letters of agreement from each participating agency (if applicable);
5. A copy of your Corrective Action Plan in response to your Peer Assessment and Compliance Review (PACR) report submitted to the Judicial Council (if a review has been completed)—**please do not send the Individual Program PACR report**;
6. A copy of your most recent fiscal audit of your program performed by an independent CPA or accounting firm; <sup>3</sup>
7. A copy of your initial plan to transition from DSS and/or probation department funding or in-kind support to other funding, (if you are currently receiving DSS and/or probation department funding or in-kind support, please specify the in-kind services,

---

<sup>3</sup> Please note, your CASA contract with the Judicial Council may include an audit protocol for 2002-2003.

the total amount of contributions received and what percentage of your entire program budget this funding represents); and

8. A copy of your revised grievance report (see “Program Narrative, 1. ‘CASA Program Description’”).

I certify that the information in this proposal is true and complete and that the CASA program of (Name of county) is in compliance with rule 1424 of the California Rules of Court.

Our proposal and all attachments follow behind this cover letter.

Signed  
(Name and Title)

Attachments



## **[ATTACHMENT II]**

On the following pages are a list of possible outcome measures and the forms you will need to complete your proposal.

All of the forms may be downloaded as Microsoft Word documents from the Judicial Council's Center for Families, Children & the Courts Web site at *[www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/grants/CASA.htm)*.

## **List of Possible Outcome Measures**

1. Number of medical and dental services provided to CASA children.
2. Number of CASA children receiving appropriate educational services.
3. Average number of placements for CASA children.
4. Percentage of missing parents of CASA children located and involved.
5. Percentage of CASA volunteers taking more than one case.
6. Average number of continuances for CASA cases.
7. Number and percentage of CASA children who experienced recurrence of abuse or neglect while in care.
8. Number of CASA children who reenter the court system 6 months or more after case closure.
9. Percentage of children achieving permanent placement at 6, 12, and 18 months after being assigned a CASA.
10. Type of placement at court case closure:
  - a. Number and percentage returned home.
  - b. Number and percentage placed with a relative or legal guardian.
  - c. Number and percentage adopted.
11. Percentage of CASA children remaining in permanent home (placement at dismissal) 6 months after case closure with the court.
12. Average number of months (in the past year) children in the CASA program are under court jurisdiction.
13. Percentage of CASA children dismissed from court custody at 6, 12, and 18 months after being assigned a CASA.
14. Number of CASA cases that experienced case closure with the court during the past 12 months.
15. Number of CASA cases that experienced case closure with the child welfare agency during the past 12 months.

**Judicial Council CASA Grant Program  
2002–2003 Grant Proposal**

**Abstract**

Name of CASA Program:  
(if applicable)

Target County or Counties:

Population Size of County or Counties:<sup>1</sup>

Amount Requested:<sup>2</sup> \$00.00

Type of Funding Requested:

- ☐ New, start-up program (applicant ☐ Existing program ☐ Development Grant  
has not assigned CASA volunteers to  
dependency cases at any time in the  
two years prior to August 30, 2002)

For existing programs only:

Area of Concentration:

Summary of Area of Concentration Project:

(Your summary should briefly state the focus and goal of your area of concentration.)

Name of Program Director  
Or Development Grant  
Applicant:  
Address:  
City, State, Zip Code:  
Telephone Number:  
Fax Number:  
E-mail:

<sup>1</sup> This number must be based on the population report provided by the Department of Finance.

<sup>42</sup> For counties with a population under 700,000, the grant amount may not exceed \$45,000. For counties with a population of 700,000 or more, the grant amount may not exceed \$60,000.

Name of Financial Contact:

Address:

City, State, Zip Code:

Telephone Number:

Fax Number:

E-mail:

Presiding Juvenile Court Judge:

Telephone Number:

Fax Number:

Director of Child Welfare Services:

Telephone Number:

Fax Number:

E-mail:

## PROJECT BUDGET

(for 2002–2003 Judicial Council grant and match only)

BUDGET CATEGORY AND LINE-ITEM DETAIL			TOTAL COST
	Judicial Council	Matching/In-kind	
<b>Personnel</b>			
<b>Fringe Benefits</b>			
<b>Rent</b>			
<b>Travel</b>			
<b>Equipment</b>			
<b>Supplies</b>			
<b>Telephone</b>			
<b>Postage</b>			
<b>Printing/Photocopying</b>			
<b>Contractual</b>			
<b>Other</b>			
<b>TOTAL</b>			

5

---

<sup>5</sup> The Peer Review Fee is a mandatory fee for all programs. Your award will automatically reflect a five percent reduction for the fee. Please do not include the review fee in your budget.



# Grant Project Activity Plan

Program/Applicant name:

Prepared by:

Grant period:

County:

Date submitted:

List the activities that will be conducted in order to attain the goals of your area of concentration (for new and existing programs) or development plan (for development grant applicants) for this grant year. The activities listed on this form should relate directly to the methodology section (item 4 for new and existing programs) or project design and implementation (item 2 for development grant applicants; see page 26).

[illegible]

**CALIFORNIA RULES OF COURT**  
**Adopted by the Judicial Council of California**

**Rule 1424. Program guidelines for court-appointed special advocate programs**

**(a) [Definitions]**

- (1) A “CASA program” is the local court-appointed special advocate program, or variation thereof, which has adopted and adheres to these guidelines and which has been designated by the local presiding juvenile court judge to recruit, screen, select, train, supervise, and support lay volunteers to be appointed by the court to help define the best interests of children in juvenile court dependency and wardship proceedings.
- (2) A “CASA volunteer” is a person who has been recruited, screened, selected, and trained, who is being supervised and supported by a local CASA program, and who has been appointed by the juvenile court as a sworn officer of the court to help define the best interests of a child or children in juvenile court dependency and wardship proceedings.
- (3) A “dependency proceeding” is a legal action brought on behalf of an allegedly abused, neglected, or abandoned child pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 300 et seq. The action is designed to protect children, preserve and reunify families, and find permanent homes for children who cannot be returned to their parents. Dependency proceedings include actions to appoint a legal guardian, terminate parental rights, and grant adoptions for dependent children of the juvenile court.
- (4) A “wardship proceeding” is a legal action involving a child under the age of 18 years who is alleged to be
  - (i) a person described under Welfare and Institutions Code section 601 (who is beyond parental control or habitually disobedient or truant) or
  - (ii) a person described under Welfare and Institutions code section 602 (who has violated any state or federal law or any city or county ordinance).

**(b) [Recruiting, screening, and selecting CASA volunteers]**

- (1) A CASA program shall adopt and adhere to a written plan for the recruitment of potential CASA volunteers. The following considerations are essential to the effective recruitment of qualified CASA volunteers:



- (A) The recruitment effort shall clearly explain the purposes of the CASA program and its role on behalf of children in juvenile court proceedings;
  - (B) The recruitment effort shall define the role and responsibilities of the CASA volunteer in such proceedings;
  - (C) The recruitment effort shall emphasize the degree and duration of the commitment expected of the CASA volunteer. The CASA volunteer should be prepared to commit a minimum of one year of service to a child and may be called upon to commit several hours per week of duty;
  - (D) The recruitment effort shall address the demographics of the jurisdiction by making all reasonable efforts to ensure that individuals representing all sectors of the community and all racial, ethnic, linguistic, and economic sub-groups within it are recruited and made available for appointment as CASA volunteers; and
  - (E) The recruitment effort should include some individuals who are able to work effectively with children who have special needs such as those with hearing, sight, or speech impairment; developmental disability; physical or mental disability; or any other condition requiring an individual with special skills for communication and advocacy.
- (2) A CASA program shall adopt and adhere to a written screening procedure for potential CASA volunteers. The following considerations are essential to the effective screening of qualified CASA volunteers:
- (A) The screening procedure shall be designed and implemented to ensure that those accepted for training are of good character, competent to fulfill the role of a CASA volunteer, and willing to commit the time and energy necessary to effectively present and advance the best interests of a child or children in juvenile court proceedings;
  - (B) The screening procedure shall include an information and orientation mechanism for aspiring CASA volunteers, presenting such topics as the role of the juvenile court, including its relationship to the child welfare agency in child abuse and neglect cases, the general CASA concept, a description of the local CASA program, and the role and responsibilities of the CASA volunteer;
  - (C) The screening procedure shall include a written application that generates adequate identifying data; information regarding the applicant's education, training, and experience; minimum age requirements; current and past employment; demonstrated interest in children and their welfare; personal experience with child abuse and neglect that bears upon the applicant's

ability to be effective in these types of cases; and a statement of commitment to the role and responsibilities of a CASA volunteer;

- (D) The screening procedure shall include notice to the applicant that a formal security check will be made including inquiries, through appropriate law enforcement agencies, regarding any criminal record, driving record, or other record of conduct that would disqualify the applicant from service as a CASA volunteer. The security check should include fingerprinting and reference to criminal registries in appropriate states. It should also ensure that the CASA volunteer has adequate motor vehicle insurance coverage if use of a motor vehicle will be necessary to the performance of duty. Refusal to consent to a formal security check shall be grounds for rejecting an applicant;
  - (E) The screening procedure shall include a minimum of three references regarding the character, competence, and reliability of the applicant and suitability for assuming the role of a CASA volunteer; and
  - (F) The screening procedure shall include a personal interview or interviews by a person or persons approved by the presiding juvenile court judge or his or her designee probing the essential areas of concern with respect to the qualities of an effective CASA volunteer. A written, confidential record of the interview and the interviewer's assessments and observations should be made, and kept in the advocate's file.
- (3) A CASA program shall adopt and adhere to a written preliminary selection procedure for CASA candidates regarding entry into the CASA training program. The following considerations are essential to the effective selection of CASA volunteer trainees:
- (A) The selection procedure should be designed and implemented to ensure that those selected recognize the seriousness of the role to which they aspire and the demands that it will make upon them; and
  - (B) The selection procedure should ensure that those not selected are treated with dignity and respect and, if possible, referred to alternative volunteer opportunities more suitable for them.

*(Subd (b) amended effective January 1, 1995.)*

- (c) **[Training of CASA volunteers]** A CASA program shall adopt and adhere to a written plan for the initial training of CASA volunteers. The following considerations are essential to the initial training and final selection of CASA volunteers:

- (1) The initial training curriculum shall include at least 24 hours of formal instruction covering the following topic areas:

Child Development and Family Systems

Dynamics of Child Abuse and Neglect

The Role of Law Enforcement

The Role of the Child Welfare Agency

The Role of the Juvenile Court and Its Key Participants

Dependency Law and Procedure

An Introduction to Discovery and Evidence

Court Appearances and Testimony

Ethics, Confidentiality of Information, and Mandated Reporting

Community Resources for Children

Cross-Cultural Issues

The CASA Concept

The Local CASA Program

The Role and Responsibilities of the CASA Volunteer

Investigation

Interviewing

Report Writing and Verification

Advocacy

Any other subject deemed appropriate by the CASA program director or the juvenile court presiding judge. If volunteers will be assigned to wardship cases, the initial training shall include instruction on relevant juvenile court law.

- (2) The initial training program shall include an opportunity for each trainee to visit the juvenile court while it is in session and observe proceedings similar to those in which he or she would be involved as a CASA volunteer as well as the opportunity to visit a local child welfare agency and other community agencies and institutions relevant to the work of a CASA volunteer.

- (3) The initial training program shall include written materials covering the topic areas of the training curriculum. These materials should be provided to trainees in a form designed for easy access, reference, and update.
- (4) Trainers and faculty of the initial training program should be persons with substantial knowledge, training, and experience in the subject matter they present and should be competent in the provision of technical training to laypersons aspiring to be CASA volunteers.
- (5) CASA program staff and others responsible for the initial training program should be attentive to the participation and progress of each trainee and be able to objectively evaluate his or her abilities according to criteria developed by the CASA program for that purpose.

The final selection process is contingent on the successful completion of the initial training program, as determined by the presiding judge of the juvenile court or his or her designee.

*(Subd (c) amended effective January 1, 1995.)*

- (d) **[Oath]** At the completion of training, and before assignment to any child's case, the CASA volunteer shall take a court-approved oath describing the duties and responsibilities of the advocate. The CASA volunteer shall also sign a written affirmation of that oath. The signed affirmation shall be retained in the volunteer's file.

(e) **[Duties and responsibilities]**

- (1) CASA volunteers serve at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction over the proceeding in which the volunteer has been appointed. A CASA volunteer is an officer of the court and is bound by all court rules.
- (2) A CASA program shall develop and adopt a written description of duties and responsibilities, consistent with local court rules, which shall address at least the following:
  - (A) Supporting the child throughout the court proceedings;
  - (B) Explaining the court proceedings to the child;
  - (C) Establishing a relationship with the child to better understand the child's needs and desires;
  - (D) Reviewing available records regarding the child's family history, school behavior, medical or mental health history, etc.;

- (E) Identifying and exploring potential resources that will facilitate family preservation, early family reunification, or alternative permanency planning;
- (F) Explaining the CASA volunteer's role, duties, and responsibilities to all parties associated with a case;
- (G) Communicating the child's needs to the court in written reports and recommendations;
- (H) Ensuring that the court-approved plans for the child are being implemented;
- (I) Investigating the interests of the child in judicial or administrative proceedings outside of juvenile court;
- (J) Communicating and coordinating efforts with the child's social worker, probation officer, and attorney; and
- (K) Other duties and responsibilities as determined by the presiding juvenile court judge or a designee.

*(Subd (e) amended effective January 1, 1995.)*

**(f) [The appointment of CASA volunteers]**

- (1) The presiding juvenile court judge and the CASA program director shall develop a written procedure for the selection of cases and the appointment of CASA volunteers for children in juvenile court proceedings. The procedure should recognize the fact that volunteers will not be available for all children, and should include criteria for determining those types of cases and children most likely to benefit from the appointment of an advocate. If volunteer resources are limited, preference in assignment should be given to children in dependency proceedings.
- (2) The court may appoint a CASA volunteer at any time during dependency proceedings. In the event that appointment is made prior to the establishment of jurisdiction, the court order shall specify that the duties of the child's advocate are limited to supporting the child and advocating for needed services. The court shall admonish the child's advocate not to investigate jurisdictional issues. In making prejurisdictional appointments, the courts and CASA programs are encouraged to follow the early assignment protocol developed by the California CASA Association.

- (3) The court may appoint a CASA volunteer at any time following a declaration of wardship at a disposition hearing in wardship proceedings.
- (4) In developing the criteria for selection of cases and assignment of a volunteer, the CASA program shall consider the complexity of the case; the availability of alternative support persons in the child's life; the age and sex of the child or children; the cultural, ethnic, linguistic, religious, and other background characteristics (including any disabilities) of the child and family; the potential assistance a volunteer could provide; the availability of a particular volunteer to meet the specific needs of the child; and such other factors as the CASA program may deem relevant to the assignment of the most effective CASA volunteer for the case.
- (5) The procedure shall ensure that a qualified volunteer is assigned to a case as early as possible after a court referral is made.
- (6) The procedure shall ensure that no conflict of interest exists with respect to the CASA volunteer and any other party or interest associated with the case.
- (7) The procedure shall ensure that all appointments and assignments are made by an appropriate order of the court, and that, whenever possible, the order for appointment shall contain specific duties of the volunteer and the reasons for the appointment; that all appointments and assignments are acknowledged in writing; and that all persons entitled to notice of the hearings are notified of the appointment of the CASA program and of their opportunity to petition the court for a hearing on the matter. The advocate may request the court at any time for a clarification of CASA duties on a specific case.
- (8) The procedure shall ensure that as soon as feasible after the appointment or assignment of a CASA volunteer, he or she obtains access to appropriate case materials, including the court file, the appointment order, the assignment letter, and such other documents as may be necessary to effectively present and promote the child's or children's best interests. Likewise, the CASA volunteer shall receive immediate guidance from CASA program staff in developing a plan of action for undertaking the duties and responsibilities of a CASA volunteer.

*(Subd (f) amended effective January 1, 1995.)*

**(g) [Oversight, support, and supervision of CASA volunteers]**

- (1) A CASA program shall adopt and adhere to a written plan, approved by the presiding juvenile court judge, for the oversight, support, and supervision of CASA volunteers in the performance of their duties. The following considerations are essential to the effective oversight and supervision of CASA volunteers:

- (A) Case supervisors and other CASA program staff shall be persons with substantial knowledge, training, and experience regarding the CASA concept and the curriculum the volunteers have been trained in, and be competent to provide the necessary supervision, support, and evaluation services to CASA volunteers in the exercise of their duties;
- (B) The written oversight, support, and supervision plan shall be designed and implemented to ensure that the CASA program staff can readily determine the status of a case assigned to a CASA volunteer; assess the needs of the volunteer for support with respect to any aspect of the case; evaluate the performance of the volunteer in presenting and promoting the best interests of the child; and provide whatever support or other intervention as may be appropriate to the circumstances of the particular case;
- (C) The written oversight, support, and supervision plan shall include an accurate case-assignment record; an up-to-date calendar; a monthly case log system; and regularly scheduled case conferences during which the CASA volunteer meets personally with a CASA program staff person to review the progress, status, and prospective activities of the case(s) to which the volunteer is assigned. Case conferences should occur at least every 60 days and should be conducted with reference to the case file and a checklist or protocol adopted by the CASA program for this purpose. The checklist and a brief written record of the case review should be preserved in the case file;
- (D) The plan shall ensure that CASA volunteers have ready access to CASA program staff for support, assistance, and direction. For emergency situations, the written plan should contain some provision for 24-hour coverage whether by the CASA program itself or through a local crisis hot-line or other mechanism;
- (E) The plan should ensure that CASA volunteers have ready access to an attorney knowledgeable in juvenile court law provided by the CASA program, whether retained or pro bono, for advice and direction on nonroutine legal issues that may arise in the course of duty. Access to such counsel should be regulated by CASA program staff;
- (F) The plan shall include an annual evaluation procedure to confirm the continuing qualification of the CASA volunteer. This procedure should include analysis of case files and the case review records; the volunteer's record with respect to ongoing training and continuing education; inquiries to the juvenile court officers in whose courts the volunteer has received assignments; follow-up security checks if warranted; and such other information as may have come to the attention of CASA program

staff. A written record of the evaluation shall be maintained in the volunteer's file;

- (G) The plan shall include a procedure for reviewing grievances by the volunteer or by any party brought against the volunteer; and
  - (H) The plan shall ensure that the presiding juvenile court judge, and other juvenile court judges and referees, have open and regular channels of communication to the CASA program director and ready access to information regarding the status of CASA cases and activities.
- (2) A CASA program shall adopt and adhere to a written plan for the ongoing training and continuing education of CASA volunteers. The following considerations are essential to the effective ongoing training and continuing education of CASA volunteers:
- (A) Ongoing training shall be designed and presented to maintain and improve the level of CASA volunteer knowledge and skill and to keep volunteers up-to-date on changes in law, local court procedure, the practices of other involved agencies including the local child welfare agency, CASA program policies, and developments in the fields of child development, child abuse, and child advocacy;
  - (B) Ongoing training opportunities should be provided at least monthly if possible and CASA volunteers shall participate in at least 10 hours of continuing education in each year of service;
  - (C) Ongoing training may be provided directly by the CASA program, in cooperation with another agency or agencies, including the local child welfare agency, or through an outside agency if the substance and quality of the training opportunity and its suitability for the continuing education of CASA volunteers has been approved by the CASA program. Site and field visits to agencies and institutions relevant to the work of a CASA volunteer should be included as a part of ongoing training;
  - (D) The program should consider having available resource persons in such areas as education, mental health, and medicine for consultation on an as-needed basis; and
  - (E) Trainers, consultants, and faculty of ongoing training and continuing education should be persons with substantial knowledge, training, and experience in the subject matter they present and should be competent in the provision of technical training to persons serving as CASA volunteers.

*(Subd (g) amended effective January 1, 1995.)*



**(h) [Removal, resignation, and termination of a CASA volunteer]** The CASA program shall adopt a written plan for the removal, resignation, or involuntary termination of a CASA volunteer.

- (1) A volunteer may resign or be removed from an individual case at any time by the order of the juvenile court presiding judge or a designee.
- (2) A volunteer may resign from the program by submitting a written notice to the director of the program.
- (3) A volunteer may be involuntarily terminated from the program by the court upon written application to the court by the program director. The court should determine by local court rule the procedure for acting on the application, including the procedure for filing a grievance.

*(Subd (h) amended effective January 1, 1995.)*

**(i) [CASA program administration and management]**

- (1) A CASA program shall adopt and adhere to a written plan for effective and efficient program governance and evaluation. The following considerations are essential to the effective governance of a CASA program:
  - (A) The governance plan shall be designed to best serve the underlying principles of the CASA concept. The plan shall include, if applicable, articles of incorporation, by-laws, and a board of directors. Any CASA program that functions under the auspices of a public agency or private entity shall specify in its plan a clear administrative relationship with the parent organization and clearly delineated delegations of authority and accountability. No CASA program may function under the auspices of a probation department or department of social services. Any CASA program that is functioning under the auspices of a probation department or department of social services on the effective date of this rule must comply with this subdivision by July 1, 2001. The CASA program director of a program that functions under the auspices of a public agency or a private entity shall appoint an active advisory council to:
    - (i) Support the CASA program in its relations with the court and the community;
    - (ii) Assist in the development of resources; and
    - (iii) Provide advice and recommendations to the CASA program with regard to program goals and policies.

- (B) The governance plan shall include a clear statement of the purpose or mission of the CASA program and express goals and objectives calculated to further its purposes;
  - (C) The governance plan shall include a procedure for the recruitment, selection, and hiring of a highly competent chief executive officer for the CASA program. Clear lines of authority among the presiding judge of the juvenile court, the governing body, and the chief executive officer should be drawn; the chief executive officer's duties and responsibilities should be delineated; and a mechanism for regular evaluation should be specified in an employment agreement; and
  - (D) The governance plan shall include a mechanism for a regular evaluation of program effectiveness and reevaluation of its goals and objectives.
- (2) A CASA program shall adopt and adhere to a written plan for effective and efficient program operations.
- (A) The operations plan shall include an organizational chart with clear lines of authority to a governing body or official and to the presiding juvenile court judge, as applicable; and
  - (B) The plan should include preparation and maintenance of a program manual containing the policies and procedures indicated by these guidelines; initial and ongoing training materials; and such additional material as the CASA program may deem appropriate to the effective performance of its program functions. This manual should be made available to the CASA volunteers and serve as their key reference source in undertaking and performing their duties.
- (3) A CASA program shall adopt and adhere to a written plan for effective and efficient program management. The management plan should include an administrative manual containing personnel policies, record-keeping practices, data collection practices, and other internal systems for ensuring high-quality administrative support for staff, CASA volunteers, juvenile court personnel, allied agencies, and others who collaborate in the work of the CASA program.
- (4) A CASA program shall adopt and adhere to a written plan for effective and efficient fiscal control.
- (A) The fiscal plan should include budgetary projections and a strategy for obtaining necessary funding to finance program operations;
  - (B) The fiscal plan should include policies and procedures, as applicable, to ensure the integrity and effective and economical use of funds

appropriated, allocated, or donated in furtherance of the program's purposes; and

- (C) The fiscal plan should include, if applicable, an annual audit or fiscal review conducted by a qualified professional consistent with generally accepted accounting principles.
- (5) In conjunction with the presiding judge of the juvenile court or his or her designee, each CASA program should develop local juvenile court rules pertaining to the CASA program. Those rules may include:
  - (A) Definition of the role of a CASA volunteer in juvenile court proceedings;
  - (B) Types of cases on which a CASA volunteer will be appointed;
  - (C) Range of activities that can be undertaken by a CASA volunteer;
  - (D) Point of time in proceedings when a CASA volunteer will be appointed;
  - (E) Definition of the relationship among operational participants, including, but not limited to, the court, the child welfare agency, mental health professionals, attorneys, and CASA volunteers and staff;
  - (F) Provision for open and regular channels of communication between the CASA program director/staff and the presiding juvenile court judge, other judges and referees in the juvenile court, child welfare system officials, and officials from other participating agencies; and
  - (G) Access to confidential personnel and CASA case records.

*(Subd (i) amended effective January 1, 2000; previously amended effective January 1, 1995.)*

- (j) **[Confidentiality]** The presiding juvenile court judge and the CASA program director shall adopt a written plan governing confidentiality of case information, case records, and personnel records. The written plan shall include provisions that:
  - (1) All information concerning children and families in the juvenile court process is confidential. Volunteers shall not give case information to anyone other than the court parties, their attorneys, and CASA staff;
  - (2) CASA volunteers are required by law (Pen. Code, §11166 et seq.) to report any reasonable suspicion that a child is a victim of child abuse or serious neglect as described by Penal Code section 273;
  - (3) The child's case file shall be maintained in the CASA office by a custodian of records. No one shall have access to that file except upon approval of the

CASA program director. The office shall establish a written procedure for the maintenance and destruction of case files; and

- (4) The volunteer's personnel file is confidential. No one shall have access to the personnel file except the volunteer, the CASA program director or his or her designee, or the presiding judge of the juvenile court. Local court rules should determine standards and procedures for access by other parties, including the process by which such documents can be subpoenaed.

*(Subd (j) amended effective January 1, 1995.)*

**(k) [Reports; service]**

- (1) Each court that has a CASA program shall adopt a local rule, effective on or before January 1, 2002, specifying when CASA reports are to be submitted to the court, who is entitled to receive a copy of the report, and who shall copy and distribute the report.
- (2) At least two court days before the hearing, the report shall be distributed to the persons entitled to receive it.

*(Subd (k) adopted effective January 1, 2001.)*

*Rule 1424 amended effective January 1, 2001; adopted effective July 1, 1994; previously amended effective January 1, 1995, and January 1, 2000.*

**WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE  
DIVISION 2. CHILDREN  
PART 1. DELINQUENTS AND WARDS OF THE JUVENILE COURT  
CHAPTER 1. COURT-APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES**

**§ 100. Program guidelines; funding**

The Judicial Council shall establish a planning and advisory group consisting of appropriate professional and program specialists to recommend on the development of program guidelines and funding procedures consistent with this chapter. At a minimum, the council shall adopt program guidelines consistent with the guidelines established by the National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association, and with California law; but the council may require additional or more stringent standards. State funding shall be contingent on a program adopting and adhering to the program guidelines adopted by the council.

The program guidelines adopted by the council shall be adopted and incorporated into local rules of court by each participating superior court as a prerequisite to funding pursuant to this chapter.

The council shall adopt program guidelines and criteria for funding which encourage multicounty CASA programs where appropriate, and shall in no case provide for funding more than one program per county.

The council shall establish in a timely fashion a request-for-proposal process to establish, maintain, or expand local CASA programs and require local matching funds or in-kind funds equal to the proposal request. The maximum state grant per county program per year shall not exceed seventy thousand dollars (\$70,000) in counties in which the population is less than 700,000 and shall not exceed one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) in counties in which the population is 700,000 or more, according to the annual population report provided by the Department of Finance. *(Amended by Stats. 2000, Ch. 447, Sec. 12. Effective January 1, 2001.)*

**§ 101. Definitions**

As used in this chapter, the following definitions shall apply:

- (a) "Adult" means a person 18 years of age or older.
- (b) "Child or minor" means a person under 18 years of age.
- (c) "CASA" means a Court-Appointed Special Advocate. "CASA" also refers to a Court Designated Child Advocate in programs which have utilized that title. A CASA has the duties and responsibilities described in this chapter and shall be trained by and function under the auspices of a court-appointed special advocate program as set forth in this chapter.

(d) "Court" means the superior court, including the juvenile court.

(e) "Dependent" means a child described in Section 300 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

**§ 102. Staff; appointment of CASAs; duties**

(a) Each CASA program shall, if feasible, be staffed by a minimum of one paid administrator. The staff shall be directly accountable to the presiding juvenile court judge and the CASA program board of directors, as applicable.

(b) The program shall provide for volunteers to serve as CASAs. A CASA may be appointed in juvenile dependency proceedings under Section 300 and in actions to terminate parental rights to custody and control, as deemed appropriate by the juvenile or other superior court judge hearing the matter.

(c) Each CASA shall serve at the pleasure of the court having jurisdiction over the proceedings in which a CASA has been appointed. A CASA shall do all of the following:

(1) Provide independent, factual information to the court regarding the cases to which he or she is appointed.

(2) Represent the best interests of the children involved, and consider the best interests of the family, in the cases to which he or she is appointed.

(3) At the request of the judge, monitor cases to which he or she has been appointed to assure that the court's orders have been fulfilled.

(d) The Judicial Council, through its rules and regulations, shall require an initial and ongoing training program consistent with this chapter to all persons acting as a CASA, including, but not limited to, each of the following:

(1) Dynamics of child abuse and neglect.

(2) Court structure, including juvenile court laws regarding dependency.

(3) Social service systems.

(4) Child development.

(5) Interviewing techniques.

(6) Report writing.

(7) Roles and responsibilities of a CASA.

(8) Rules of evidence and discovery procedures.

(9) Problems associated with verifying reports.

(e) The Judicial Council, through its CASA Advisory Committee, shall adopt guidelines for the screening of CASA volunteers, which shall include personal interviews, reference checks, checks for records of sex offenses and other criminal records, information from the Department of Motor Vehicles, and other information as the Judicial Council deems appropriate.

### **§ 103. Qualifications; training; investigative authority**

(a) Persons acting as a CASA shall be individuals who have demonstrated an interest in children and their welfare. Each CASA shall participate in a training course conducted under the rules and regulations adopted by the Judicial Council and in ongoing training and supervision throughout his or her involvement in the program. Each CASA shall be evaluated before and after initial training to determine his or her fitness for these responsibilities. Ongoing training shall be provided at least monthly.

(b) Each CASA shall commit a minimum of one year of service to a child until a permanent placement is achieved for the child or until relieved by the court, whichever is first. At the end of each year of service, the CASA, with the approval of the court, may recommit for an additional year.

(c) A CASA shall have no associations which create a conflict of interest with his or her duties as a CASA.

(d) An adult otherwise qualified to act as a CASA shall not be discriminated against based upon sex, socioeconomic, religious, racial, ethnic, or age factors.

(e) Each CASA is an officer of the court, with the relevant rights and responsibilities that pertain to that role and shall act consistently with the local rules of court pertaining to CASAs.

(f) Each CASA shall be sworn in by a superior court judge or commissioner before beginning his or her duties.

(g) A judge may appoint a CASA when, in the opinion of the judge, a child requires services which can be provided by the CASA, consistent with the local rules of court.

(h) To accomplish the appointment of a CASA, the judge making the appointment shall sign an order, which may grant the CASA the authority to review specific relevant documents and interview parties involved in the case, as well as other persons having significant information relating to the child, to the same extent as any other officer of the court appointed to investigate proceedings on behalf of the court.

### **§ 104. Extent of duties; investigations**

(a) The court shall determine the extent of the CASA's duties in each case. These duties may include an independent investigation of the circumstances surrounding a case to which he or she has been appointed, interviewing and observing the child and other appropriate individuals, and the reviewing of appropriate records and reports.

(b) The CASA shall report the results of the investigation to the court.

(c) The CASA shall follow the direction and orders of the court and shall provide information specifically requested by the court.

### **§ 105. Confidentiality of records and information**

All otherwise confidential records and information acquired or reviewed by a CASA during the course of his or her duties shall remain confidential and shall be disclosed only pursuant to a court order.

### **§ 106. Notice of hearings and proceedings**

The CASA shall be notified of hearings and other proceedings concerning the case to which he or she has been appointed.

### **§ 107. Inspection of records; copies**

Upon presentation of the order of his or her appointment by the CASA, and upon specific court order and consistent with the rules of evidence, any agency, hospital, school, organization, division or department of the state, physician and surgeon, nurse, other health care provider, psychologist, psychiatrist, police department, or mental health clinic shall permit the CASA to inspect and copy any records relating to the child involved in the case of appointment without the consent of the child or parents.

### **§ 108. Report to legislature**

The Judicial Council shall report to the Legislature on the implementation of the program, and shall include recommendations on the continued funding and expansion of the program, as appropriate.

### **§ 109. Participation in certain proceedings prohibited**

Nothing in this chapter permits a person acting as a CASA to participate or appear in criminal proceedings or in proceedings to declare a person a ward of the juvenile court pursuant to Section 601 or 602.